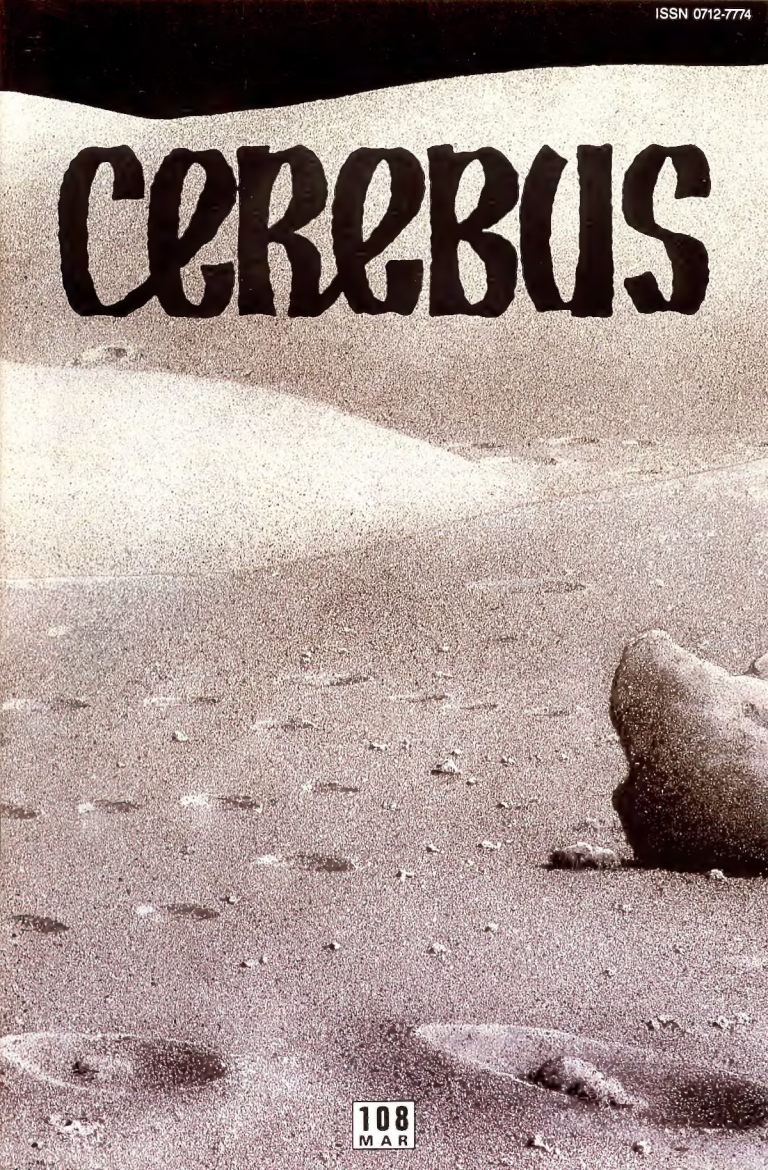
ISSN 0712-7774

CEREBUS



108
MAR

NOTE • FROM • THE PRESIDENT

I've been dreading this.

Since around June of last year, I've been thinking "Someone's going to write to me and ask me to jot down some thoughts on Superman for his fiftieth anniversary."

But then I would think, "No. No one would really be that stupid."

In the case of Amazing Heroes, it would appear my judgement was a tad hasty.

"Dear Artist/fan"

I swear I didn't notice this my first time through. What a wonderful salutation. Let's circle "artist" and move on, shall we?

"On February 29, 1988, one of the greatest symbols of American imagination celebrates his 50th birthday. Superman — hero and idea!"

Man. Right on, I'm thinking. I have a number of early Action Comics. The non-stop movement. Punchy one and two-word word balloons. Nine panels to the page. Superman gives the corrupt union boss one up'long side his head. Superman clears the little guy of trumped-up charges. Superman traps a corrupt capitalist in one of his shoddy buildings and scares shit out of him, saving him only at the last possible second.

"Who, from the humblest beginnings has become one of the world's best known characters."

And I'm going, like, what **is this** shit? Humble? Superman didn't have any humble beginnings. Superman ate fire and shit ice from the git-go. Superman was bigger than anything before or since. Comic strips are just newspaper ghetto features, like the horoscope or weather report. Superman kicked his way onto newstands and made the whole world notice. "Humble beginnings." Asshole Californian probably means Cleveland or some shit.

"In trubute"

I swear I am not making this up. You know those science fiction movies where the robot suddenly gets a hitch in his git-along and for a second the tape loops inside and a word comes out funny and that's when you cop to the fact that you're dealing with a robot and not a human being? I rest my case.

"Amazing Heroes — The award-winning national magazine of the comics medium"

In case this has somehow slipped any of our artist/fan minds.

"will devote an entire issue to the Man of Steel"

This is a tribute on par with being included in the Reader's Digest Sweepstakes mailing. I mean, come **on**. They publish a hundred and five of these stupid things a year (and I know I promised myself I'd never get into this because Amazing Heroes does help finance alot of worthwhile Fantagraphics stuff), and every one of them the content is **zero**, zip, nada, empty, click, nil. I flip through the things when they come in, I put them down, I see them a while later and I say "Mm. I haven't looked through that yet, have I?" And I pick it up and look through it and I think "Oh, Lord. I **did** look through it". And I drift off and I'm through it and I don't remember what I saw the **second** time.

"We'd be honoured if you would join us . . ."

You are **too** kind to all us artist/fans.

"if you would take a moment to put down your feelings on Superman, what he means to you, to children, to the world"

Superman, as originally conceived, as a force for the common man, as an answer to the mindless tyranny with which his name (as a term) had come to be identified, as a foe of corruption and injustice, as the embodiment of FDR-style liberalism and the epitome of the notion that one individual can, should and must, of necessity, make a difference; in all this Superman . . . Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster's Superman . . . the only true Superman . . . stands as a beacon of freedom shining as brightly for an adult who holds the ideals of the character sacred as he does for a child seeing him and learning them for the first time. As a symbol of the nearly limitless power of imagination, he has inspired creators for five decades to take up pen and brush in pursuit of excellence, to weave our tapestry once more. To aspire; that one day we might know a tenth . . . a hundreth of the greatness implied in knowing you **are** Jerry Siegel. You **are** Joe Shuster. You **are** the creators of Superman, And that no monumental and tragic injustice can strip you of that mantle. As comic book creators, this is our greatest heritage . . . and our greatest debt.

"if you would grace us with a drawing of any kind, we would be over-whelmed."

How about if I just take your word for it and save myself the drawing time.

"We can pay but a minimum amount (and gladly any postage), but"

A moment frozen in time. hard to believe it possible in a letter a mere half-page in length. But true, for all of that.

"think of all the delights the character has given you and others"

There is really altogether too much of this going on, but I had come to the point where I **hoped** everyone was having the common decency not to infect **my** mail-box with it.

Sure. I'll do a picture of Superman and get Gerhard to put the Fortress of Solitude behind him. We'll make money. And we can send it to Kevin Dooley. And he can print it and **he** can make money. Then we'll send copies to the distributors right, Kev? And **they** can make money. Then we'll get the distributors to send them to the shops and **they** can make money. And the Beast 666 Fifth Avenue gets free advertising for whatever the latest crop of Jerry Siegel ghost-writers and Joe Shuster ghost-artists are churning out.

Kevin, if I thought seriously of all the delight I've gotten from the original Superman, the real Superman, I would probably go mad from the injustice that has done to Siegel and Shuster all of their lives. The millions that would be theirs today had they been dealing with honourable people instead of scum who aren't fit to breathe the same air as them. That any creative person would be a party to praising an injustice compounded year upon year, decade upon decade is an example of vile hypocrisy and insidious and destructive self-loathing on the part of comic book creators.

"I thank you. Superman thanks you. Clark thanks you".

Render unto me a fucking break, Dooley.

CEREBUS

NO. 108 MARCH 1988

DAVE SIM
President

KAREN McKIEL
Administrator

GERHARD
Backgrounds, cover-colour, and tones

Circulation
30,500

CHURCH AND STATE
a novel

•

BOOK ONE
(Cerebus 52 to Cerebus 56)
Aprés State

•

BOOK TWO
(Cerebus 57 to Cerebus 63)
Back to lest

•

BOOK THREE
(Cerebus 64 to Cerebus 80)
Church and State

•

BOOK FOUR
(Cerebus 81 to Cerebus 89)
The Sacred Wars

•

BOOK FIVE
(Cerebus 90 to Cerebus 101)
Astoria

•

BOOK SIX
(Cerebus 102 to Cerebus 106)
The Final Ascension

•

BOOK SEVEN
(Cerebus 107 to Cerebus 111)
Walking On The Moon

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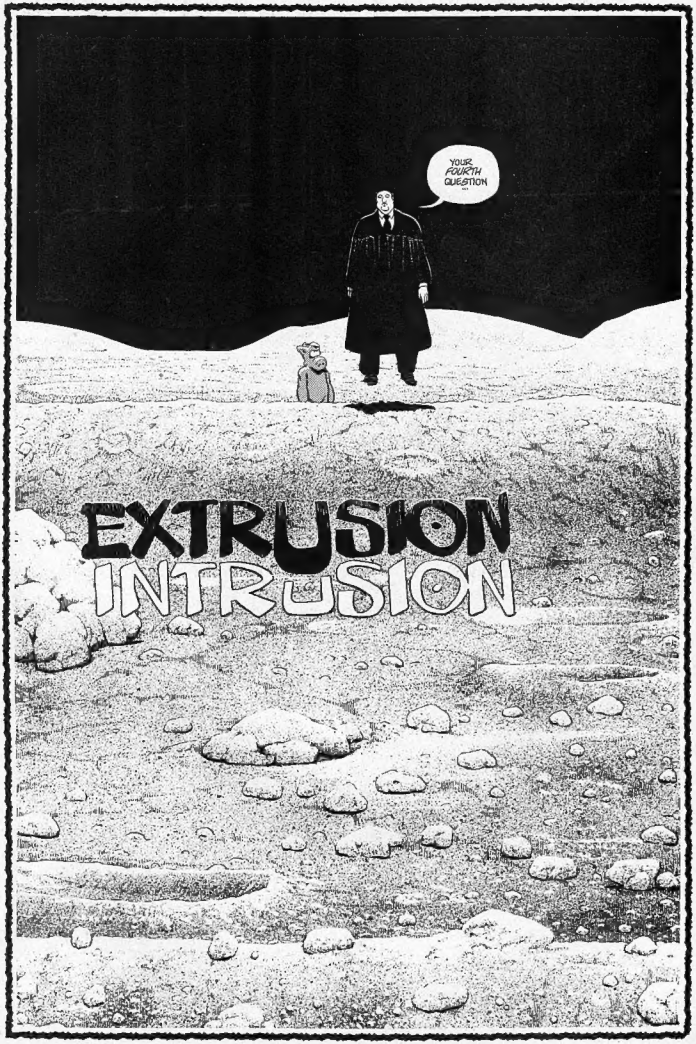
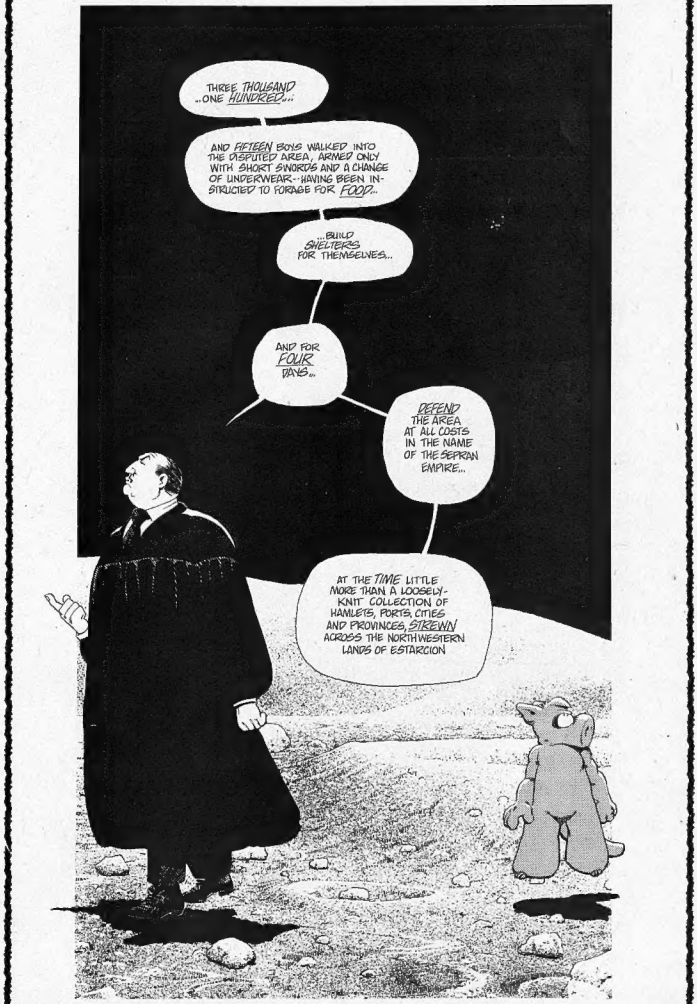

YOUR FOURTH QUESTION
EXTRUSION
INTRUSION

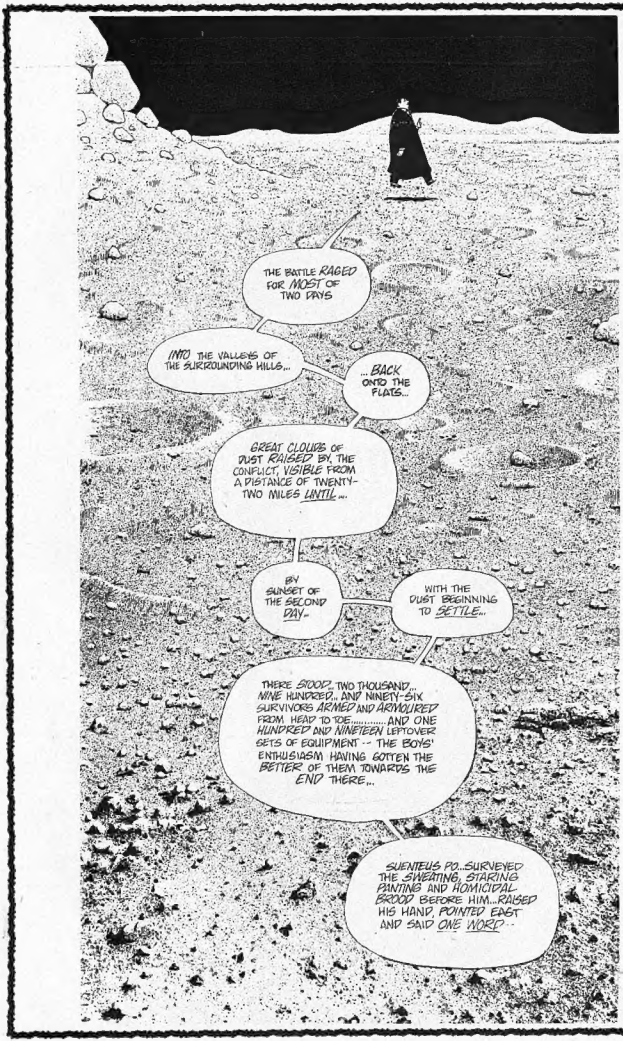
SUENTELIS PO THE FIRST-- THANK GOD HE'S NOT ALIVE TODAY -- BEGAN HIS MILITARY CAREER RECRUITING YOUNG BOYS BARELY OUT OF ADOLESCENCE INTO THE HARSHEST IMAGINABLE TRAINING PROGRAM TWENTY MILES WITHIN THE DISPUTED BOUNDARIES OF THE RED MARCHES...
...DIRECTLY ABOVE THE EXTENSIVE NETWORK OF UNDERGROUND CITIES WHICH WERE CONSTRUCTED AND HAVE BEEN OCCUPIED BY THE PIGT RACES FOR SEVERAL THOUSAND YEARS SINCE THE SUDDEN AND RELATIVELY UNTIMELY DEMISE OF THE BLACK TOWER EMPIRE...
ABOUT WHICH LITTLE IS DOCUMENTED, LESS IS SUSPECTED AND ALMOST NOTHING IS KNOWN FOR SURE.


THREE THOUSAND ..ONE HUNDRED...
AND FIFTEEN BOYS WALKED INTO THE DISPUTED AREA, ARMED ONLY WITH SHORT SWORDS AND A CHANGE OF UNDERWEAR--HAVING BEEN INSTRUCTED TO FORAGE FOR FOOD..
...BUILD SHELTERS FOR THEMSELVES..
AND FOR FOUR DAYS...
DEFEND THE AREA AT ALL COSTS IN THE NAME OF THE SEPRAN EMPIRE...
AT THE TIME A LITTLE MORE THAN A LOOSELY-KNIT COLLECTION OF HAMLETS, PORTS, CITIES AND PROVINCES, STREWN ACROSS THE NORTHWESTERN LANDS OF ESTARCION

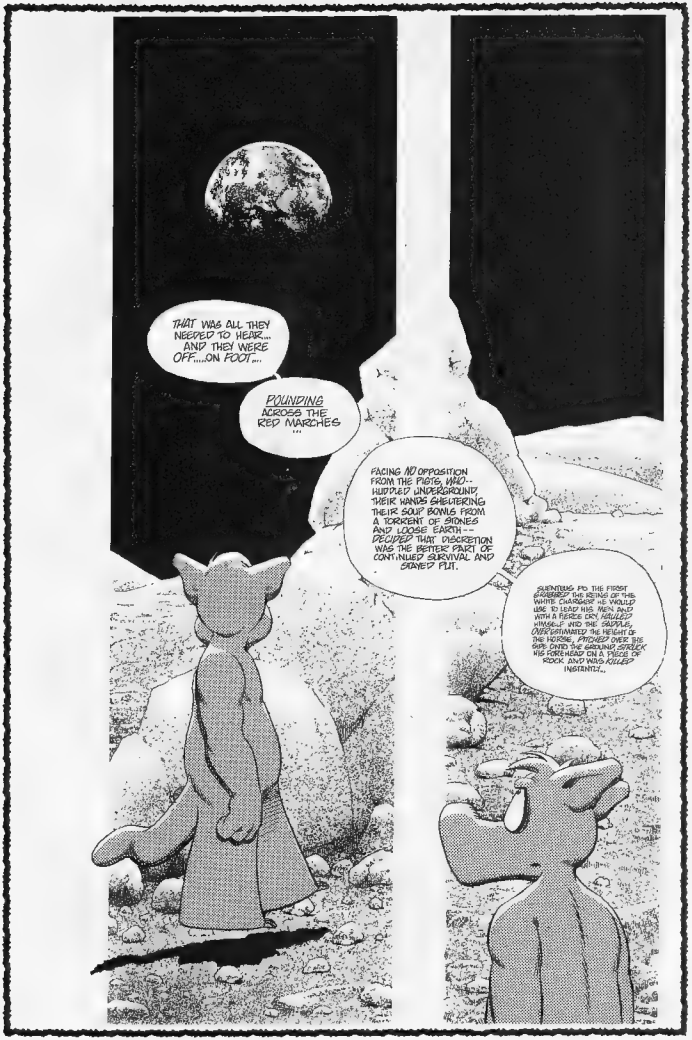
ON THE THIRD DAY, DRIVEN NEARLY INSANE BY BLACK FLIES, A LACK OF FRESH WATER AND A SHORTAGE OF FOOD, THEY WERE SET UPON BY A LARGE BAND OF PIGS! SOLDIERS WHO WERE TIRED OF SIX THOUSAND, TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-NINE FEET..
ONE OF THE BOYS WAS AN AMPUTEE--
..KNOCKING SMALL CLUMPS OF EARTH OFF OF THEIR SECRET UNDERGROUND CEILING INTO THEIR SECRET UNDERGROUND SOUP BOWLS...
BY DINNER-TIME HALF OF THE BOYS HAD BEEN KILLED..
BY MIDNIGHT WHEN THE PIGS RETREATED, THERE WERE ONLY FOUR HUNDRED AND EIGHT OF THE ORIGINAL EXPEDITION REMAINING...

THROUGH THE SPRING...
THE SUMMER
...AND INTO THE FALL... SUENTEELIS PO CONTINUED THE PROCESS...
EACH TIME SENDING EXACTLY THREE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN BOYS INTO THE WILDS OF THE RED MARCHES...
EACH TIME DEMANDING THAT THEY DEFEND THE AREA WITH THEIR LIVES FOR FOUR DAYS.
AND EACH TIME ENDING UP WITH A FEW HUNDRED AND SOME-ODD SURVIVORS WHO RETURNED TO THE SEPRAN LANDS SCARRED, WEARY, BUT ALIVE-- AND WITH A DEFINITE ENTHUSIASM FOR BLOODSHED ...UNTIL AT LAST... HE HAD A FORCE OF FOUR THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED AND TWELVE DEDICATED AND PRACTISED KILLERS...
FOUR THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED AND FOUR OF WHOM COULD HAVE SHAVED WITH AN ABRASIVE WASH-CLOTH.

FINALLY...
THAT HARVEST SEASON
...JUST AFTER THE GRAIN HAD BEEN STORED AND THE APPLE CIDER WAS STARTING TO TURN...
...HE LED THE FOUR THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED AND TWELVE SURVIVORS OUT ONTO THE SALT FLATS NORTH OF SERREA -- FORMED IN PART BY THE DETONATION OF THE SODIUM CHLORIDE BOMBS BY THE SMART PUNK REDWOODS AND THERE SHONED THEM -- ROW UPON ROW -- GLEAMING IN THE BRILLIANT SUNSHINE -- THREE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN FULL SUITS OF ARMOUR -- SHORT SWORDS, LONG SWORDS, LONG BOWS, CROSS BOWS, SHIELDS, CHAIN-MAIL ...AND ASSORTED DIRKS, DAGGERS, AND HELMETS...
THEY GOT THE IDEA


THE BATTLE RAGED FOR MOST OF TWO DAYS
INTO THE VALLEYS OF THE SURROUNDING HILLS...
...BACK ONTO THE FLATS...
GREAT CLOUDS OF DUST RAISED BY THE CONFLICT, VISIBLE FROM A DISTANCE OF TWENTY-TWO MILES UNTIL...
BY SUNSET OF THE SECOND DAY...
WITH THE DUST BEGINNING TO SETTLE...
THERE STOOD, TWO THOUSAND... NINE HUNDRED... AND NINETY-SIX SURVIVORS ARMED AND ARMOURED FROM HEAD TO TOE..... AND ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEEN LEFTOVER SETS OF EQUIPMENT -- THE BOYS' ENTHUSIASM HAVING GOTTEN THE BETTER OF THEM TOWARDS THE END THERE...
SUENTEUS PO...SURVEYED THE SWEATING, STARING PANTING AND HOMICIDAL BROOD BEFORE HIM...RAISED HIS HAND, POINTED EAST AND SAID ONE WORD--

"KILL."


THAT WAS ALL THEY NEEDED TO HEAR... AND THEY WERE OFF....ON FOOT....
POUNDING ACROSS THE RED MARCHES ...
FACING NO OPPOSITION FROM THE PIGTS, WHO-- HUDDLED UNDERGROUND THEIR WANDS CHATTERING THEIR SOUP BOWLS FROM A TORRENT OF STONES AND LOOSE EARTH-- REJOICED THAT DISCRETION WAS THE BETTER PART OF CONTINUED SURVIVAL AND SKINNED FLIT.
SUENTENG PO THE FIRST CASUALTY THE REIGN OF THE WHITE CHARGER HE WOULD USE TO LEAP HIS MEN AND WITH A FIERCE CRY, HAULED HIMSELF INTO THE SADDLE, OVERESTIMATED THE HEIGHT OF THE MOUNT, PITCHED OVER HIS SIDE, AND THE GROUND STRUCK HIS FOREHEAD ON A PIECE OF ROCK AND WAS KILLED INSTANTLY...

HIS SON, ALFRED... THANK GOD HE'S NOT ALONE TODAY -- WAS STANDING NEARBY HOLDING A HANDLE AS HIS MOTHER HAD TOLD HIM TO DO WHEN HE SAW HIS FATHER STRIKE THE GROUND. NEVER ONE TO MISS AN OPPORTUNITY, HE BRIDGE FORWARD, PROCLAIMED HIMSELF SUPREME PD OF THE SECOND LOAN, SMARTLY INTO THE SADDLE OF THE NAVE CHARGER, PROPERTLY KICKED THE FOOT OF HIS DEAD FATHER FROM THE STIRRUP WHERE IT HAD BECOME ENTANGLED AND RODE OFF IN THE DIRECTION OF THE CLOUD OF DUST RETREATING TOWARDS THE HORIZON...
IT TOOK THAT A GREAT DEAL OF THE MS. MARY SUFFERED ON NEW EDIT SHORTLY TO BE LATER AS PRESENT NAME, NEW DEPRES LOOKS THE WORTH. LIKE IN A LONG LIST OF DISHARMONIOUS 'N WAS IT HOPES TO SEE THE SUCCESSFUL ENDING OF THE CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE, WITH A CLEFT PALATE AND AN ARRESTED INTELLECT IN YOUNG ANNA FITZPATRICK THAT DEMONIAL WAS THE GREATEST FEAR OF VICTORIAN MOTHERS? THE YOUTHS MEMBERS INFORMED HIS PERSONAL SURVEY BY MEANS OF THE SPECIAL CONSTABLES WHO WERE ENGAGED TO THE LOWER CITY, NARROWLY LEAVING THE LOADED CITY TO THE NON RESISTANT MERCY OF THE INVADING FORCES.
?
NOW WHERE IT WAS A MATTER OF MERE CIVIL DISTURBANCE IN THE FUSSY DISTRICTS OF THE CITY TO APPEAR ON THE SCENE

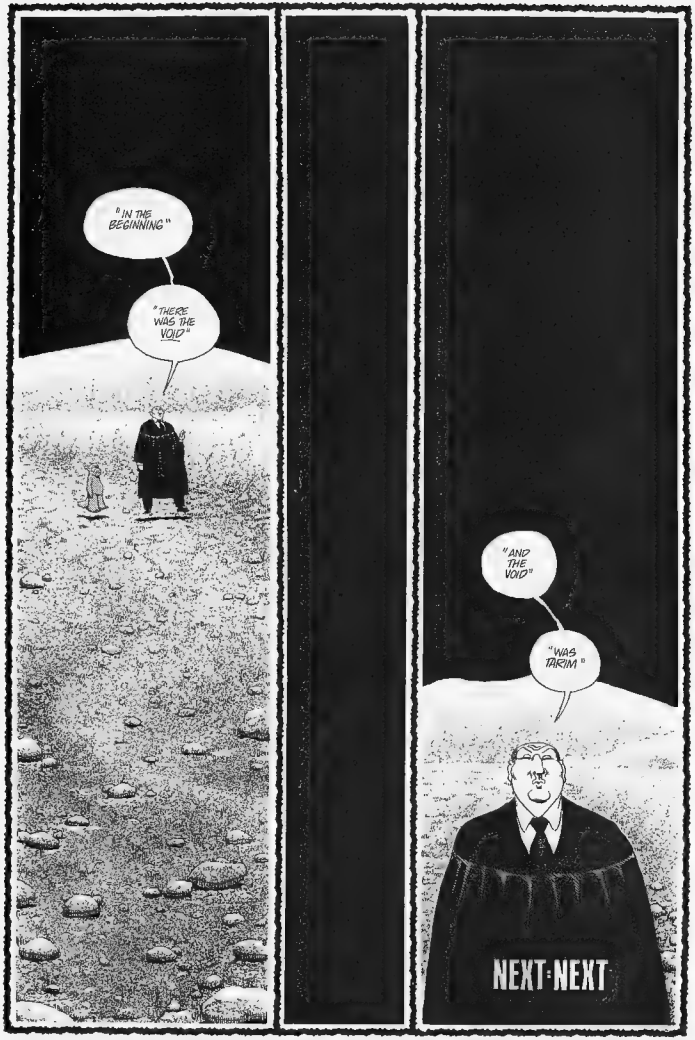
AND SO--
FOR WEEKS AFTER -- YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO SWING A DEAD CAT IN JERUSALEM
WITHOUT HITTING SOMEONE DESCENDED FROM THE HOUSE OF DAVID...
ANOINTED BY A CLOSE RELATIVE
...RIDING INTO TOWN ON A DONKEY.
NOW

TO RETURN TO THE MEANINGFUL ISSUES AT *HAND*...
A LITTLE LESS THAN SIX OR SO THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW *EVIDENCE* WILL BE DISCOVERED THAT AT *ONE TIME* ALL OF THE ENERGY AND MATTER IN THE UNIVERSE WAS LOCATED IN A SINGLE SPOT...
AND THAT TWENTY BILLION AND SOME-ODD HUNDRED MILLION YEARS AGO, IT SUPER-HEATED TO TRILLIONS UPON TRILLIONS OF DEGREES AND...
IN A MATTER OF SECONDS
EXPLODED OUTWARD AT NEARLY UNIMAGINABLE SPEEDS IN THE SINGULAR AND SEMINAL EVENT OF CREATION, KNOWN TO THE GIANT REDWOODS AND MANKIND
THE DINOSAURS AND THE FOOT-LONG TELEPATHIC COCKROACHES HAVING *NO INTEREST* IN NOR WORD FOR 'THE BEGINNING'
AS 'THE BIG BANG!'

THE MEN WHO DISCOVER THIS EVIDENCE AND WHO WILL THEN TAKE IT UPON THEMSELVES TO DISPENSE IT...
...WILL NOT BE STORY-TELLERS
SELF-EVIDENT
BECAUSE THEY LEAVE OFF THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY.
AND THE REASON THEY LEAVE OFF THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY
IS BECAUSE THE ONLY BEGINNING TO THE STORY WITH WHICH THEY ARE FAMILIAR
IS A NON-SEQUITUR

AND THE REASON THAT THE ONLY BEGINNING WITH WHICH THEY ARE FAMILIAR IS A NON SEQUITUR
IS THAT IT WAS GARBLED--
MANY THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO
BY A PRIEST
AND THE REASON IT WAS GARBLED-- MANY THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO-- BY A PRIEST-- IS THAT GARBLED
IT WAS WORTH A FORTUNE
ANYONE SELLING THE WORD OF TARIM
IS EMPLOYED IN THE WORLD'S SECOND OLDEST
AND MOST LUCRATIVE
PROFESSION

UN-GARBLED ON THE OTHER HAND
IT WAS MORE THAN SOMEWHAT LACKING IN COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL...
BEING... AS IT WAS
A SIMPLE STATEMENT OF THE FACT-THAT BEFORE THERE WAS ANYTHING ELSE...
THERE WAS NOTHING.


"IN THE BEGINNING"
"THERE WAS THE VOID"
"AND THE VOID"
"WAS TARIM"
NEXT:NEXT

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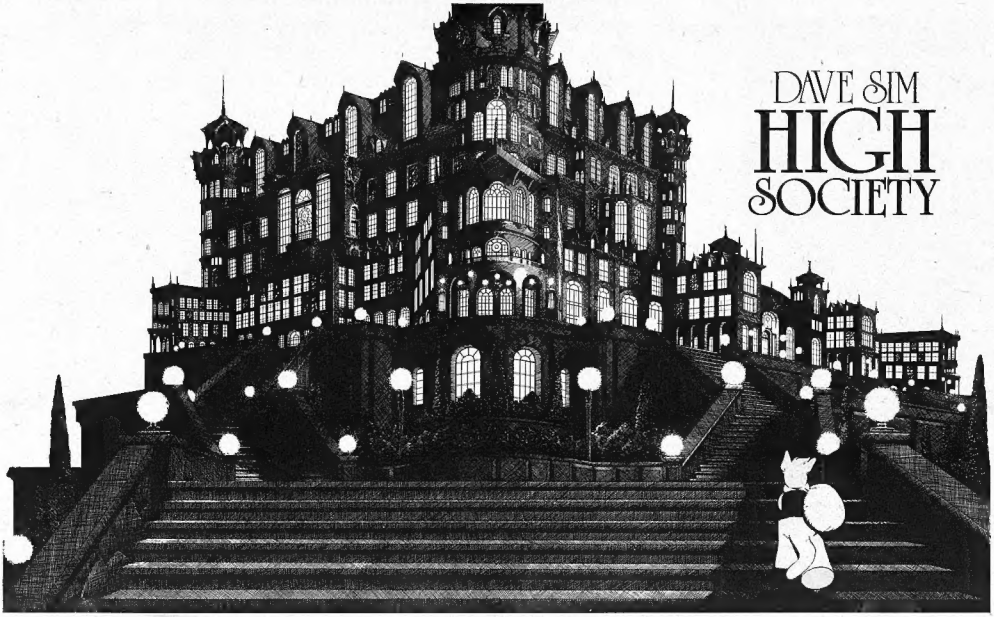

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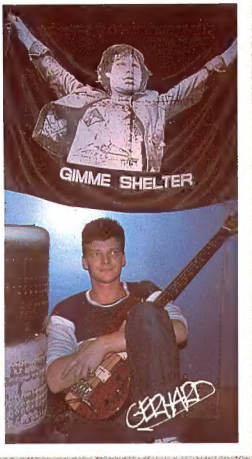

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MARIETTA, GEORGIA SUPER-FAN GRANGER "NOT REALLY A FAN" OF DAVE "SIMS"

PHOTOS CONFIRM AMAZING TALE

(Special to Aardvark Comment)

In a letter post-marked December 28, Marietta, Georgia super-fan Shawn R. Granger blew the lid off of something in revealing that he is not really a fan of Dave Sim, even going so far as to misspell the Cerebus creator's last name.

"I just finished reading your comments in Cerebus 104 and I thought I might as well tell you that I am not one of your annoying fans," the letter read. "The fact is", it went on, "I am not really a fan of yours at all. Sure I like Cerebus and I think your art is okay, but I wouldn't be too upset if someone else started doing it."

Granger went on to note, "I would never ask for your autograph since it would just ruin a perfectly good piece of paper (just think what it would do to a comic book). If I ever saw you at a convention I would probably just wonder who the fuck you were and walk off."

Sim, still visibly shaken by the letter weeks after receiving it, would say only, "I can't argue with anything he's said. If he says he's not a fan of mine, then that's that. I mean, he should know."

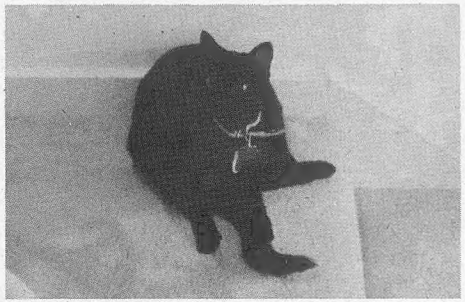
Granger amplified his earlier assertions, adding "To me you are just another ordinary person that gets in my way. If you ever cut in front of me on the highway or drove slow so I was late to wherever I was going, I would honk and yell obscenities at you just like I would any other fuckhead. I don't know if you are a druggie, alcoholic, or even an egomaniac because I have never met you. But, if you ever suddenly stopped in front of me without turning on your turn signal, I may have called you one or all of those names. And I would appreciate it if you would stay home, since that would be one less driver for me to yell at."

"I don't drive," said Sim when questioned about Granger's hypothesis. "Consequently, I have, to the best of my recollection, never cut in front of anyone, driven slow enough to make someone late or stopped in front of anyone without turning on my turn signal."

It was not initially clear how Sim's status as a non-driver would affect Cerebus' immediate future. When asked what effect Granger not being a fan would have Sim would say only "It's hard to say. We're just taking it one day at a time."

GRANGER'S BROTHER. ACCORDING to Granger, "He is not wishing that he was you. he is not wishing he was Cerebus. He doesn't even know who Dave Sims (sic) or Cerebus are."

GRANGER'S FATHER AND BROTHER. According to Granger, even in this photo "my brother is definitely not wishing he was you." He added "My Dad is wishing he had a lot money, but not that he were you."



GRANGER'S CAT, "MAGIC", AGAIN, According to Granger "Magic doesn't wish she were you. She does dream of being Cerebus. It is a hopeless dream, but still she persists.

JENNIFER PITT, IDENTIFIED by Granger as the "cute blond with popcorn up her nose" and an unidentified friend. Jennifer wishes she were Dave Sim, though Granger admits to knowing of no valid reason for this. The unidentified friend wishes, according to Granger, that she were in bed with Dave Sim. "They are both weird", he adds. It was not clear at press time if they got a quantity discount on those outfits.